



Protect Texas, Improve Public Health, and Increase the Health Care Workforce: Support Senate Bills 346 and 347 (Nelson)

Adults and children need their immunization information readily available during a public health emergency to ensure adequate protection against disease and to reduce the costs of disaster response. Adults also need consolidated immunization records for college entry, military enlistment and the attainment of certain professional health care certifications. Senate Bills 346 and 347 will save the state money, protect the public health, and ensure that Texans of all ages have greater access to their personal medical histories.

Senate Bill 346 will improve the public health by allowing adult Texans to maintain their immunization records collected before the age of 18 and to store other immunizations received as an adult in the Registry. This simple measure will save money on duplicative immunizations, allow Texans access to critical medical records, build the health care workforce, and help prevent the spread of deadly infectious diseases. Specifically, Senate Bill 346 will:

- Allow adults to choose to maintain their immunization records at the Department of State Health Services.
- Provide easy access to immunization records for Texans enlisting in the armed forces.
- Provide easy access to immunization records for Texas students entering college and graduate school, including nursing school.
- Provide easy access to immunization records for Texans seeking health care certifications.
- Allow Texans to take maximum advantage of the increasing importance of adult immunizations.

Senate Bill 347 will allow the state to transfer immunization records to other states in the event of a natural disaster. For example, should a municipality be forced to evacuate the state due to a large scale pandemic, bio-terrorist attack or hurricane, these Texans will have access to critical immunization records via the health departments of neighboring states. Specifically, Senate Bill 347 will:

- Protect Texans evacuated to other states in the event of bio-terror attack or natural disaster.
- Ensure that critical and costly vaccines are not administered unnecessarily to evacuees.
- Ensure that health care professionals can effectively triage services in the event of a mass evacuation.

Senate Bill 346 and Senate Bill 347 will NOT:

- Require participation by any Texan in an adult immunization registry
- Impact the immunization records of children currently in the immunization registry, except in the event of a declared disaster or emergency.
- Create an “opt-out” immunization registry for the State of Texas.
- Violate the privacy or release the medical history of any participating Texan.

Sponsored by the Houston Area Immunization Partnership
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IMMUNIZE. PREVENT WHAT'S PREVENTABLE.